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conditions needing administrative powers to correct. The head of Department should be empowered to make such necessary adjustments with the least in-

terference to the work of the school as a whole. In such cases it is likely that the head of department will act with the advice and consent of the principal.

THE HISTORY TEACHER AND HIS WORK

(SECOND INSTALLMENT)

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JUDGING from my own experience the topical method of study is best. By topical I mean the selection of a number of important topics in the history of the nation and the elaboration of these by the different kinds of reading cited above.¹ I prefer this method because the child should make a more intensive study of the really live issues in the history of his country than is possible with the text alone. I believe most emphatically in having a good text as an outline. From it the student can get a general view of our history, as a whole, and it is undoubtedly valuable to be able to look through a subject with clear vision; but he must go more deeply into many topics if he would see the real causes of our progress, how we have "come to be" what we are, and why he should exert his utmost powers to become an efficient citizen.

In choosing these topics little attention need be paid to wars, except to let pupils have an understanding of their causes and results—what their place is in the general scheme of things, and their bearing upon progress. Though details of battles are fascinating, one should not waste the time of the class in this way. When I first began teaching, I used Dodge's "Bird's Eye View" extensively, having each pupil master at least one battle, be able to diagram it and explain the movements from the blackboard—sheer waste of time!

After the period of exploration and settlement, the topics should be divided among:

1. Industrial and economic questions affecting us all.
2. Government training for citizenship.
3. Those foreshadowing the present, for proper understanding of the present.
4. Foreign policy, which determines our world relationships.
5. Local history, state, county, town.

Emphasis should be placed upon 1 and 3, as they include the others.

Since the school year contains only about thirty-six weeks, and since we cannot count on all of these, I should say that eighteen topics (five recitations per week) studied intensively are enough for one year. Without the text, twice as many *might* be undertaken,

but the result would be a broken continuity, which the use of the text prevents.

One topic should deal with conditions in Europe before the great Columbus—social, religious, political conditions—and their influence upon exploration. Another topic, or perhaps topics, should concern the state in which the pupil lives. If it be one of the original thirteen, as Maryland is, one topic may be devoted to its early history, settlement, colonial period, etc., and another to its later history. Other topics should treat of the growth of the political system, territorial expansion, rise of industries, commercial development, and the settlement of the West. A study of "past politics" is necessary to enable the voter to make a sound judgment on matters of voting. How can he understand the situation of today, unless he has learned how parties were formed originally, and how they have developed in the years since then? How can he understand the Constitution unless he know something of its actual working? Much might be eliminated that has no bearing upon modern conditions, and so time be gained for understanding present problems and issues through study of events that preceded and led up to them—problems such as well-managed cities, good roads, efficient schools, honest ballot, capable voters. clean local government.²

In selecting the books, especially for the required reading, the time element, the purpose of the reading, and the suitability of the books for the class should all be considered. The best plan is to go over the supply on hand before the school year begins, noting just what can be used for the topics, and making a list for future acquisition. Although the greater part of the reading should not be for information, the amount required should be carefully provided for by procuring duplicates, at least one book for every two children; and for each topic, where applicable, one of each kind of reading, ranging from standard general work to local history. The child will make his bibliography for each topic; even when all books are not available, he can work up the bibliography.

¹ See October number of the HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL.

²Cf. *Education*, April, 1914, p. 499.

After the teacher has completed his investigation of resources and planning of topics, in order to avoid waste of time, he may as well plan the readings and post them several weeks ahead. If possible, he should arrange these books upon a reserve shelf in the history room, especially if this is the study room as well. If there are not enough copies of any one book, some adjustment of study hours must be made. It is advisable in some cases to appoint certain study hours as reading periods.³ When there is enough material, one may assign several readings, one required, and others optional. Questions or problems given with the readings will produce better results. Kendall's Source Book of English History used in this way is a type of book that proves helpful. The more enthusiastic members of the class will do some independent searching for themselves, and occasionally will bring to light a much wanted book from a home book-case. This should be encouraged.

The treatment of the topic may vary; some are assigned to the whole class, others to individuals for special investigation. The daily problems to be solved in the class period must come first. In grade or in high school work it is generally advisable to cite pupils to definite book and page, often with definite questions, as I have stated above. This saves time and discouragement for the student. This *daily* problem should have some explanation as to its nature, whether outline or suggestions. It is not wise, however, to make too full an outline.

A second kind of problem is that which requires several days for solution. In studying the causes of the Revolution, the first day may be taken up with a survey of the whole movement, the teacher indicating the significant factors, thus opening the way for the more intensive work that will be made in subsequent assignments. Or the problem may be given in the form of questions.

The third kind of problem is that which is placed before the class early in the course, and which cannot be completely solved until towards its close. The purpose of such a problem is to direct the attention of the student throughout a given course to certain conclusions that are to be reached at the end, and then assist him to take definite steps towards reaching those conclusions as the work proceeds. As an instance, the inevitable conflict between the North and South may be treated in this way.

Every day's lesson should contribute to the general plan, and the teacher should see that the class is car-

ried forward towards a definite point.⁴ The pupils can see their progress more clearly with the aid of an assignment book in which they keep a full record of their readings, name of author, title of book, etc.⁵

The high school age is the period of forming ideals, and one can not give too much care and attention to reading. Books should be such as can be read with interest and clear understanding. Many of the standard works are too big, and not much more than titles, and authors need be noted. It is better to have a small number of "readable and read" books than a large number untouched.⁶

Having a small number of assignments will enable the instructor to hold the student to a definite line of work. He can make use of the oral quiz in the reading reports in quite a practicable and satisfactory way.

If the teacher makes a record each year of available books which are useful in classes, he will be saved much trouble. Sometimes he can secure books from private libraries. (Of course he uses his own books.) It is wise to keep one's list of references on cards sorted chronologically. In some such way a very accurate knowledge can be kept of the material at one's disposal, and if the teacher resigns, he can bequeath his lists to a necessarily very grateful successor.

One may be discouraged at the amount of matter forgotten by pupils; but one can at least hope that they will acquire a minimum of knowledge and a maximum of skill in handling the subject, and that at last they will see its place in the universal scheme. With the right amount of additional reading these hopes will come nearer to realization.

Let us take up first the study of the sources, which, even to the experienced teacher, present many difficulties. With proper planning, however, they may be made most profitable. The teacher must look over the field of work to be covered and select his sources. This calls for discretion. Many sources may be made clear to the student, yet may be extremely *dull* for him and lead him to detest this sort of work. When the sources have been duly selected the child must get into the habit of asking about each one:

1. Was the writer in a position to know the truth?
2. Was he capable of accurate observation?
3. Can he be trusted to tell the full unbiased truth?

This practice may be begun by class discussion and continued until the pupils understand. Some sources

⁴ Cf. *Proceedings*, 1915, Asso. Hist. Teachers of Middle States and Md., p. 27.

⁵ Cf. Johnson, *Teaching of History*, p. 343.

⁶ Cf. *History Teachers' Magazine*, February, 1916, p. 54.

³ Cf. Johnson, *Teaching of History*, p. 341.

may be read merely to arouse interest and enthusiasm. The account of a witch trial and the Boston Tea Party seldom fail to do this. A useful method is to assign source extracts of considerable length for rapid reading. Proof that these have been read may consist of a brief written paper, and the ability to give the substance orally. I have frequently made such an assignment from Hart's *Source Readers*. The student in question would be permitted to use his outline, but from it would give a good oral account of customs, etc., which he had gathered from reading the sources. At times a detailed study of a limited extract may prove more profitable.

When questions to be answered from the sources are given to the class for the first time, a part of the recitation period should be used to show the pupils how to answer a question. Personally, I have found this method of assigning questions the most practical method of dealing with sources. Another practical way is to take both sides of a question, and try to establish the truth. After some study of the sources, the student may be given a list for written treatment, allowing him some scope for using his own judgment. Written tests on sources, particularly the informational sources, are very helpful.

A critical definite examination of this kind will cause a better understanding of how history is made; it will bring a realization of the truth that people and events of by-gone days are not fiction. As I have said before, discretion must be used in choosing the sources, and none should be assigned without an object in view, whether informational or illustrative. My experience is that it is wiser to have a child memorize a few clauses of Magna Charta than have him puzzle out the whole thing; while the account of Harvard College, in the Old South Leaflets, is simply maddening to the *average* high school youth, though an occasional pupil will take interest in working it out with the aid of skillful questions. On the other hand, books of travel, journals, and personal letters awaken much interest, giving as they do, the personal, human touch to history. Few children dislike Franklin's *Autobiography*, Lincoln's speeches, Columbus' *Journal*, the Cabot letters, etc.

In studying the standard works which are to fill gaps in the text—that is, reading for information—assignments of so many pages should be required of the whole class, per lesson, or per week, as one prefers. A record may be kept in outline form in the notebook, and a report be made when called for; or, the notes may be handed in, or, better, the class may be quizzed upon the assignment.

Biography may be apportioned to individuals,

reported in class and the class be held responsible for certain points about each character, for instance, his place in history, and the causes for it; if an inventor, the invention, with date. If an excursion be made to the home of the man in question, the pupils should note certain points mentioned to them before hand.

Books of travel serve rather for interest and illustration than for information. It is well to suggest some fine paragraphs, perhaps by reading in class, and interested pupils will read further. Books describing periods give both information and illustration. They are more concrete and full of details than the text, therefore more satisfying to the mind.

Historical novels, plays and poetry are largely for illustration but sometimes serve to force home a point when other books fail, especially if the inaccuracies of the author are noted and corrected. Illustrative material leaves a more permanent impression, just as a picture will remain in the mind when the words are forgotten.

Every school should have at least one magazine and as many more as it can afford. The daily papers and county paper may be added. Various magazines issue lists of questions for the study of current events through the pages of the magazine. They also give special subscription rates. If the members of the class can afford individual copies, so much the better. The magazine gives a summary, and is therefore better than the daily paper. Detailed study of the current events gives the student greater interest in history; shows him how it is being made today; gives him a subject for conversation more worth-while than gossip; furnishes an up-to-date vocabulary and a liking for more serious reading; develops "intellectual honesty" on the part of the future voter; helps the student to understand and wish to solve the problems of the day.⁷ We use the *Outlook*, *Independent*, *Youth's Companion*, *Current Events* and *St. Nicholas*. We have not the money for individual copies.

This year with Channing's *Students' History* as a guide we have been using the topical method. The pupils have been held strictly accountable for the text, and for some lessons we had nothing but the text; for others we had reviews or summaries of periods, while at regular intervals we dropped the text for topical study alone. Many children do not like history at all, and must be urged to study it. When asked to do reading in addition to the text, they grumble and complain that they have no time, or that the books are dry, that the study of history has no value, anyway. By dropping the text for certain

⁷ Cf. *History Teachers' Magazine*, January, 1914, p. 4.

periods, we eliminate the time complaint; by careful selection of references, the dry complaint; by study of newspaper articles or similar matter, the idea that history is of no value. Even if the student cannot be brought to see the dependence of present and future conditions upon the past, he can see plainly for himself his own ignorance of many historical allusions which he would prefer to understand. I select my reading carefully, assigning definite pages with a definite problem, thus insuring interest and avoiding waste of time; while by taking up in class certain newspaper articles, and giving others for work outside class, I try to teach that there is a very practical value in knowing history.

We have not had all the books we want for the

work. Our library lacks the standard histories it should have; but we add to it whenever we can, and friends of the school have given us several hundred volumes. Some of our children have discovered good books in their homes, and they are not apt to investigate shelves of solid reading without some stimulus. In this case both pride of ownership and skill in the search for books aided us.

At the close of a week or so devoted to any one topic we have a general summary and class discussion, several being given opportunity to speak at length. This may be varied by having a paper written for the notebook, and handed in with regular "notebook work."

(To Be Continued in our December Number)

THE PLACE OF DATES IN THE HISTORY RECITATIONS

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DATES are the bugbear of history. How many times have pupils been heard to exclaim: "Oh if it were not for the dates history would be interesting and easy." And, after an untold number had complained for a considerable time, the pendulum swung to the other side, until now the least possible number of dates are administered to the pupils, and those very carefully for fear of offense. Teachers of history themselves have been guilty—if that is an appropriate term—of helping to carry out this scheme of the suppression of dates. But the extreme has already been reached and it is now high time to strike a happy medium.

Suppose, for example, that the average high school student in American history is asked to give a date of some event, chosen at random. Outside of 1492, 1776, and a few others—in most cases not even as many as ten—the pupil is sadly deficient. Can or should a true American, graduating from a present-day high school, be proud of the fact that he can not give more than a dozen dates in American history? Ought the history teacher to congratulate herself on the fact that she has taught history when her pupils can not give the exact time of a definite and important occurrence in American history? The answer is self-evident.

"But what dates should be taught and how?" asks the interested teacher of history. "Should dates be taught as *dates per se*? Surely they can not be of importance of themselves and detached." It is upon this point that the whole question turns, for until dates are presented correctly and wisely there will always be rebellion against these mis-taught facts.

Let us think for a moment of a typical high school class in history with an open-minded teacher ready to profit by suggestions along the line of teaching dates in connection with the subject. Her great question is what dates should be taught and how can they be given so that the pupils will not lose interest in the work or feel that the learning of history has become a burden. In a word, how can the pupils be taught to *think time*?

In working out some plan the American history teacher must first of all bring herself to think of world history as a whole—for presumably the pupils have all had Ancient, Medieval, and Modern courses. If necessary, the class at the beginning of the year should be given a few lectures by the teacher upon the world of pre-historic times, dealing especially with the pre-history of the Western Hemisphere.¹ All of this should be connected if possible to the pre-historic times of Europe and the islands of the sea. The pupils will find this interesting, and will at the same time get a foundation for thinking time by seeing something of how old the world may be.

¹ In most of the high school classes in history this is not done, and for the benefit of the teacher desiring to follow this plan a short list of works in English are here given:

Anderson, R. E.—*Extinct Civilizations of the West*, Appleton, 1904.

Arnold and Frost—*An American Egypt*, London, 1909.

Bancroft, H. H.—*Native Races of the Pacific States*, 1874-6, Vol. 1-5, *passim*.

Barton, B. S.—*Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America*, Phil., 1798.

Baldwin, J. D.—*Ancient America*, Harpers. 1871.

Bowditch, C. P.—*Mexican and Central American Antiquities*, Bur. of Amer. Ethnol., Bull. No. 28.

Brinton, D. G.—*Myths of the New World*, New York, 1876 (new edition).